

Minutes Approved at the 639th Meeting – March 5, 2018

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

638th Meeting

February 5, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Barnes, Beyer, Bond, Clarke Arado, Gallaher, Gowen, Herrmann, Hoerchler, Howell, Hwang, James, Jones, Mantzke, Myers, Nordli, Olson, Polansky, Porter, Shah, Shelton, Smith, Van Wienen, Wilkins

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bammidi, Kortegast, Mukhopadhyay, Osorio, Sciammarella

OTHERS PRESENT: Hughes (Secretary), Klaper (Ombudsperson)

Bond called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Gowen moved approval of the minutes of the December 4, 2017 electronic meeting; Howell seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

Honorary Degree Committee: Bond briefly reported on the November 13, 2017 meeting. The committee forwarded one recommendation for an honorary degree to the Provost and President for consideration. If supported, it will be shared with the Board of Trustees for final approval.

New Business

Graduate Assistantship Minimum Stipends for FY 19: Bond reviewed a draft memo reflecting a 3% increase in the minimum graduate assistantship stipend amounts for fiscal year 2019. He asked if there were any questions or concerns. Hoerchler stated that the chemistry department just informed GAs that their contracts would be changed from 12 months to 9 months effective next academic year. She said students who were expecting to work this summer will no longer be able to, which means they will not get paid from July 1 through August 15. Hoerchler was particularly concerned about international students and asked if there were any other jobs or funding available to them since they have to be enrolled to maintain visa status, but will not have any income. Bond stated that international students on F-1 visas do not have to register in the summer term to maintain their visa status, but acknowledged that was separate from the living expense issue. He indicated that he was unaware of the decision to change the length of assistantships in chemistry, which must have been a decision made at the college or department level. Jones indicated that it was a college decision that also affects graduate assistants in biological sciences, but their students were informed about the change much earlier. She said her department is encouraging faculty to obtain grants to fund summer graduate

assistantships. Bond indicated that students should discuss and strategize with graduate directors. Hoerchler asked if graduate assistants would still receive a tuition waiver for the summer. Bond stated that graduate assistants who hold at least an eight-week appointment in the spring semester are automatically eligible for a summer tuition waiver. Van Wienen moved acceptance of the memo reflecting a 3% increase to the minimum stipend for FY 19; James seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. (See attached.)

Announcements

Spring 2018 Career and Professional Development Workshops: Wilkins distributed posters listing the Spring 2018 workshops and asked members to post and share the information with department faculty and students. A PDF version of poster will also be distributed to members via email following the Council meeting.

This semester, Wilkins stated that she and Baker have partnered with 7 units on campus to offer 32 workshops for graduate students. She indicated their marketing strategy now includes sending weekly emails to all graduate students, as well as directors of graduate studies. Wilkins stated research indicates that, while students appreciate receiving this information from Career and Professional Development, it means even more when coming from program areas directors and faculty. She asked Council members to please forward information about the workshops to their students and encourage them to participate.

Wilkins noted that over 600 students participated in workshops last fall with about a 70% attendance rate, a percentage well above the national average. Wilkins also noted that she and Baker would appreciate the opportunity to talk about career and professional development in classes and department meetings, as well as one-on-one meetings with students.

The Office of Graduate Career and Professional Development also began offering Individual Development Plan (IDP) workshops this academic year, which Wilkins noted has been well received by students. She indicated there are now 200 keys available from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). During the fall semester, there were 13 graduate students representing four different colleges who were supported by faculty to participate in the AAAS five-part grant writing module series. Wilkins noted that AAAS courses are beneficial to all graduate students, not just those in STEM programs. Finally, the LinkedIn series, offered as part of our NIU workshops, has garnered interest by students as 91% of employers now use that social media platform to identify potential employees. Wilkins indicated that they have tracked all of the 2016 graduates from NIU, both domestic and international, and approximately half are discoverable using LinkedIn.

Bond noted that the skill slicer that Baker and Wilkins have built is a pragmatic tool designed to help students identify competitive- and salary-advantage skills in their occupation of choice. Bond said the skills scanner was the core of the IDP workshops offered this semester and proved to be revealing to the students with regard to jobs and training. Sagar Shah, a graduate student in Electrical Engineering, indicated that he

participated in the IDP workshops and valued being able to see the various titles, salaries, and skills required for jobs in his field.

For more information, please contact Dr. Gary Baker or Dr. Elizabeth Wilkins at graduatecareers@niu.edu. Workshop and registration information is on the Graduate School website under Professional Development: <http://www.grad.niu.edu/grad/professional-development/workshops.shtml>.

Meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.



Northern Illinois University
The Graduate School

February 5, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Offices That Appoint Graduate Assistants

FROM: Bradley G. Bond, Dean of the Graduate School and Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies

BSARJ

RE: Graduate Assistantship (GA) Stipends for AY 19 (2018-19)

The Graduate Council has approved a resolution mandating that the minimum stipend amounts be increased by either the federal Consumer Price Index or the amount of increase granted faculty salaries, whichever is higher (i.e., 3%). The Graduate Council further resolved that departments shall determine their own individual maximum amounts. Departments may set stipends at any rate above the established minimum.

The following minimum stipend amounts will be effective for assistantship (teaching, research, and staff) appointments beginning between August 16, 2018 and August 15, 2019.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP STIPENDS
Fall 2018 through Summer 2019

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>3/4-time</u>	<u>1/2-time</u>
Official University Minimum:	\$458	\$343	\$229
	semi-monthly	semi-monthly	semi-monthly

Also, please be reminded that applicable Board and University policies preclude a graduate assistant from working more than 20 hours per week.

- cc: Vice Presidents
- Council of Deans
- Associate Deans
- Graduate Council
- Sponsored Programs Administration
- Graduate Assistantship Employment, HRS